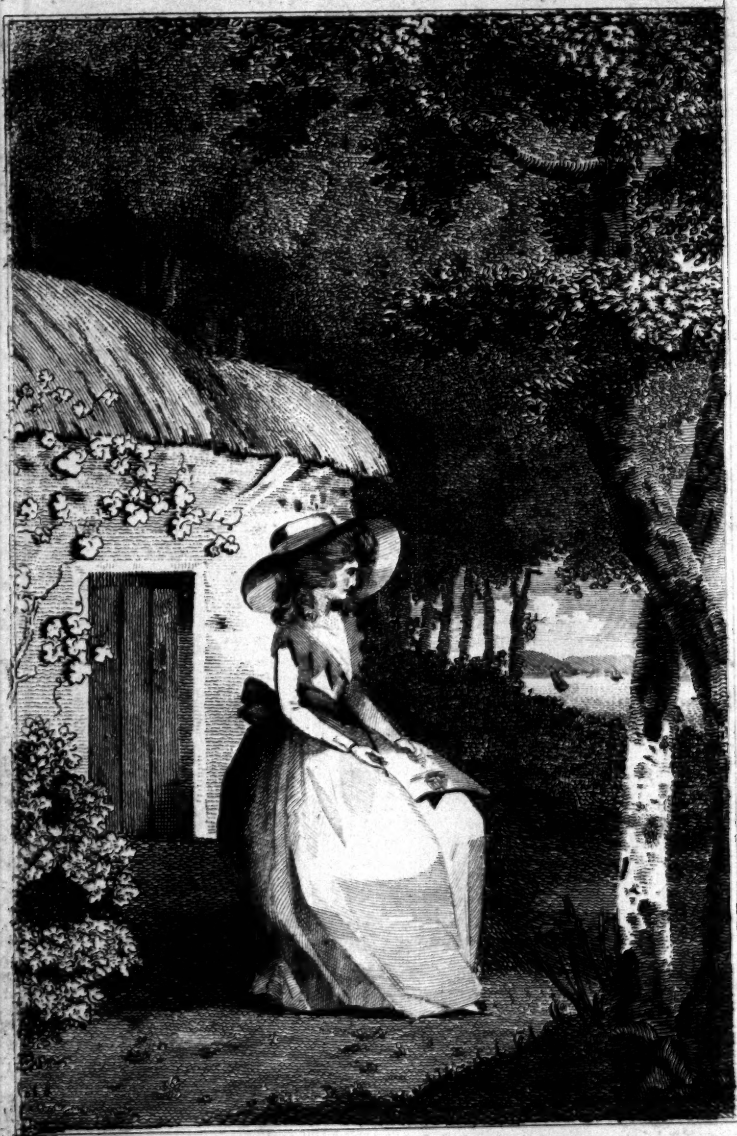
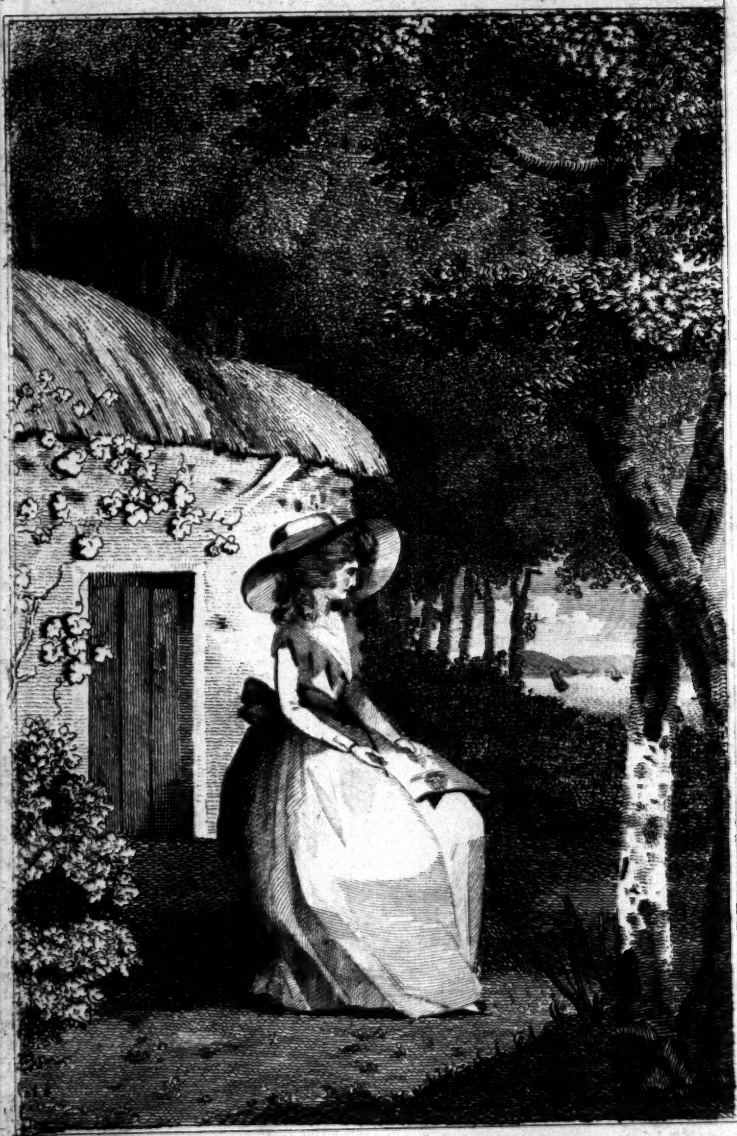


FRONTISPIECE.



*"At the door of my Hut, I can sit & copy
the Vessels floating on the Ocean."*

FRONTISPIECE.



*"At the door of my Hut, I can sit & copy
the Vessels floating on the Ocean."*

CATHARINE;

OR, THE

WOOD OF LLEWELLYN:

A

DESCRIPTIVE TALE,

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE

VILLAGE OF MARTINDALE, &c.

This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,
I better brook, than flourishing peopled towns.

Shakespeare.

In such green palaces the first Kings reign'd,
Slept in their shades, and Angels entertain'd.

Waller.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for W. LANE, Leadenhall-Street.

1788.

X 68-209

TO THE HONORABLE

Miss *H O W E*.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE

INSCRIBED, WITH

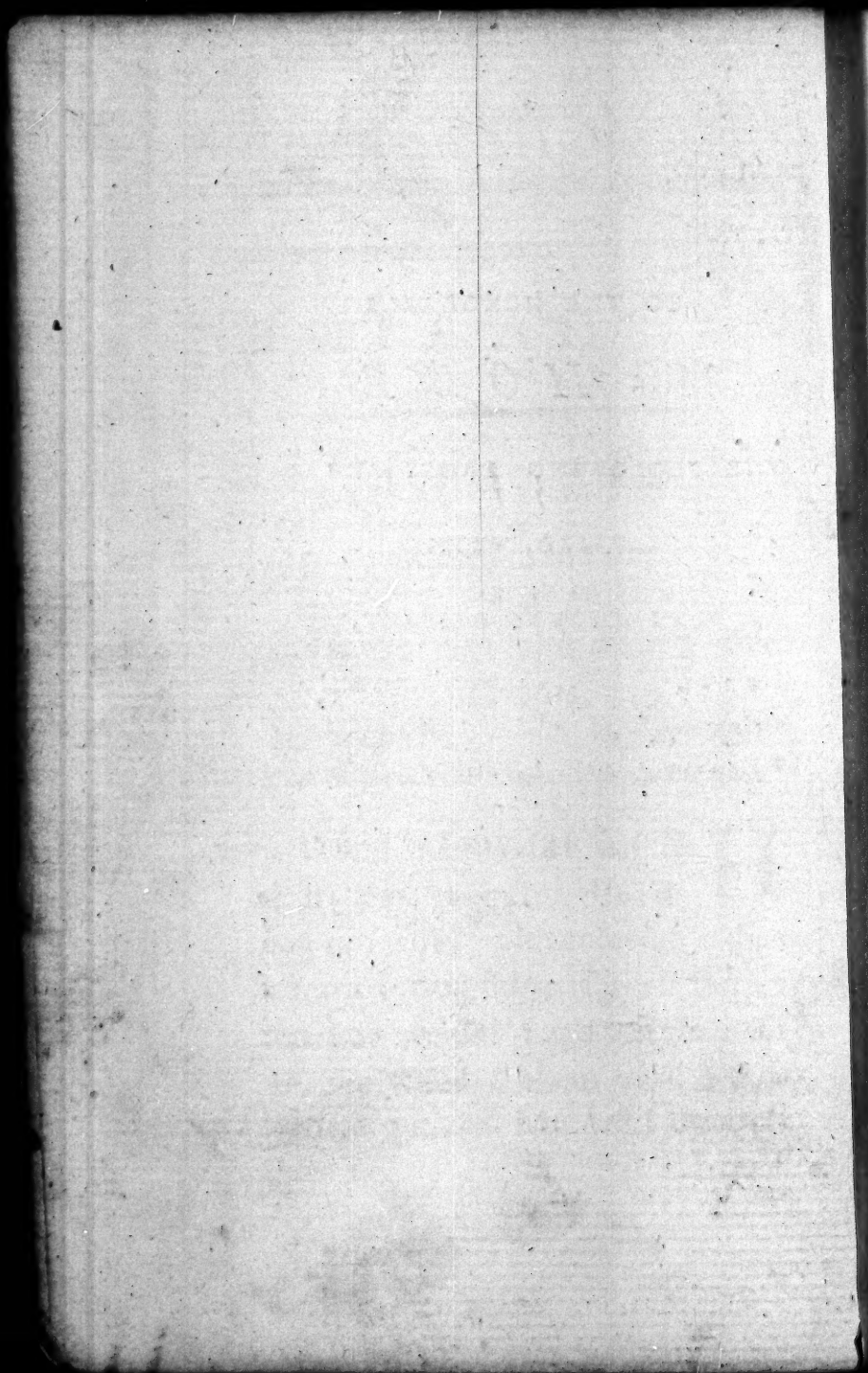
PROFOUND RESPECT,

BY HER MOST OBEDIENT,

AND DEVOTED,

HUMBLE SERVANT,

The AUTHOR.



CATHARINE.

LETTER I.

COLONEL HARLEY,

TO

THE HONORABLE MISS PERCIVAL.

“Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied,
“Cry but ah me! couple but love and dove.”

HA! ha! ha!—really my dear
Charlotte, your request is
rather unreasonable. How can you
expect the fervor of poetry from a
man of my age? Know you not
that I have made half my journey
through life? and having arrived
Vol. I. B with

with safety at the summit of the hill, I am preparing to walk slowly and soberly down the other side; nor will I ever again step an inch out of my road to pluck laurels. For this time, however, and it must be the last, I have indulged you. The death of your favourite has given me some trouble. I here enclose his elegy; but in return for it I insist on your sending the *secret History* you have promised me. Catharine Mortimer is a charming girl; besides, she is your friend, I cannot therefore but be interested in her fortune.

A GOLDFINCH'S ELEGY.

Ah! fairest of the feather'd train,
 My pensive muse laments thy doom!
 She breathes this sad funereal strain,
 To print upon thy garden-tomb.

Should vanity's light footsteps tread
 The green sward, where thy relics lie;
 A moral in these lines she'll read.
 'Twas thine to *flutter*, sing, and die!

But ah! no grief thy bosom stung,
 No cares thy parting spirit prest;
 For beauteous Charlotte o'er thee hung,
 And dropp'd a tear upon thy breast.

So will the lonely lily droop,
 When morning winds her head shall wave;
 Like Charlotte will the mourner stoop,
 And shed the dew-drop o'er thy grave.

LETTER II.

THE HONOURABLE MISS PERCIVAL

T O

COLONEL HARLEY.

PRAY, Colonel, present my
 respectful compliments to
 B 2 your

your Muse, and assure her ladyship, that she has given me much pleasure; and that I shall think myself highly honoured by the continuance of her acquaintance.

With respect to the secret history which you demand, I think rather imperiously, I hardly know what answer to make. I heartily wish I could fish up some plausible excuse, for really, I am not at present in the historical strain:—Besides it is a gloomy subject, and not at all suited to my palate; for you know how indifferently the *pathetic* mixes with my spirit of volatility. Thus far the preface — I now proceed to the story; but I must take the liberty of telling it in my own way. If, therefore, instead of being what I certainly

tainly intend it to be, serious and tragic, it should turn out farcical, or at best but *tragi-comical*, you know to what source my miscarriage is to be attributed.

Catharine Mortimer, my lovely friend, was formed in one of Nature's best humoured moods; tho' not without some of those eccentricities in her composition, which are commonly seen in the most perfect works of this capricious goddess. With the face of an angel, she has the heart of a mere woman. Perhaps you do not understand me, Colonel, — I cannot help it. A novel writer would have told you, that with exquisite beauty she possesses all the susceptibility, tenderness, and delicacy of her sex. He

B 3

would

would then have proceeded to a more minute description of her charms. A description so far from being *trite*, that very probably you had not read it before—above five thousand times!

But you once saw my charming Catharine, I need not therefore describe her person. You have admired her blue eyes, her blushing cheeks, and her amber-colour'd hair.

It was impossible that so sweet a flower should remain long unseen, though springing among unfrequented woods, in the bosom of the welch mountains. About six months ago, Sir Edmund Chetwyn discovered it, and determined that it should

should no longer "Waste its sweetness on the desert air." He resolved at once to pluck it from its native hills, and transplant it into the gay sunshine of a court. But to drop the metaphor.

A treaty of marriage was set on foot. The sound of *Sir* Edmund Chetwyn, Baronet, tickled the ears of the Cambro-british 'squire, her father; and his consent to the match was obtained as soon as asked. This was the state of things when I came into Wales, on a visit to Miss Mortimer. But I was not a little surprised to find, that Sir Edmund's passion, although it blazed so furiously, had not yet kindled the faintest spark in the breast of Catharine. She received his fervours with a

degree of apathy, which, considering his accomplishments, was, to me perfectly astonishing. One evening I took the liberty of giving her a hint on this subject.

“It is impossible,” said she, “my
“dearest Charlotte, that the alliance
“to which you seem to look forward,
“ward, with so much satisfaction,
“can ever take place. From the
“first moment that it was proposed
“ed to me, I rejected it in the most
“unequivocal manner. But my father,
“ther, who had previously given
“his consent, insisted upon my
“continuing to receive Sir Edmund’s
“visits. I remonstrated,
“and even dared to refuse. Unfortunately
“my father, although
“the best of parents, is subject to
“a

“ a warmth of temper, that some-
“ times hurries him into the most
“ violent excesses. It does not
“ become *me* to say, to what an
“ extravagant pitch he carried his
“ resentment against me. A re-
“ sentment so deeply fixed, that,
“ in its consequences, it threatened
“ no less than my inevitable de-
“ struction. In short, I was com-
“ pelled to affect at least a compli-
“ ance; and in order to save ap-
“ pearances, have since been under
“ the painful necessity of feigning
“ a passive acquiescence in the ad-
“ dresses of Sir Edmund Chetwyn.
“ Believe me, however, my dear
“ friend, it is not even possible that
“ I can ever be united with him.
“ There is a secret, but insur-
“ mountable bar between us. Nay,
“ so

TO CATHARINE.

“so peculiarly distressing—so very
“dreadful is my present situation,
“that I cannot even think of such
“an event, without the utmost de-
“testation and horror.”

“Good Heaven ! Catharine,
“what can all this possibly mean?”
I interrupted.—

“Before I tell you,” she replied,
“you must promise me inviolable
“secrecy.”

“I will promise ev’ry thing,” I
was on the tiptoe of curiosity.

“Know then, my dearest Char-
“lotte,” she exclaimed, (turning
aside her charming face, which was
covered

covered with blushes) "that I am already MARRIED!"

—Now Colonel, methinks I see you at this very moment, — I see you dilating your solemn visage into a stare of surprise, equally expressive and unmeaning. I see the wrinkles gather under your white, shining pate. — I see you stand, the true representative of a fresh painted Marquis of Granby, on a village sign-post, the delight and the wonder of each gazing peasant, whilst you say, or seem to say, "Away with thee, Charlotte, thou wicked dissembler. Thou dost but sport with thy *aged* lover. Thou mockest his grey hairs. The blooming Catharine Mortimer, married in her fifteenth year?"

"Impossible! —

“Impossible!—Where?—When?

“—How?—and to whom?

These are questions, which, probably, I may be inclined to answer at some future time: but for the present, you have enough. I cannot, however, conclude, without telling you seriously, that in spite of all my *assumed* vivacity, this affair, from which I predict the most dreadful consequences, has given an awkward shock to my spirits.

LETTER

LETTER III.

FROM THE SAME.

WELL, Colonel! — Who do you suppose is this male fyren, that could so easily charm the heart of the lovely Catharine, and engage her to follow him among the rocks and precipices of wedded life? Some hero of St. James's, you imagine, — A prodigy of wit and fashion. Some modern Mars, who, armed with paints, perfumes, and feathers of Ostrich, besieged this fair Venus, according to all the forms, in that case made and provided, and at length carried her away in triumph. — Indeed Sir, you are mistaken. But I'll tell

tell you the tale in right regular order.

In the south of Cambria, where Snowden rears his white head above the clouds, there lived a plain honest farmer, whose name was Ackland. Providence blessed him, (mark my gravity) with two sons. The younger of these inherited the humility and meekness of his parents; but the elder possessed a spirit bold, daring, and adventurous. He scorned to follow the occupation of his fore-fathers; and throwing off the shackles of constraint at an early age, he left his native mountains, and went to sea. Having served the usual time in the Navy, George Ackland was promoted to a lieutenancy, when, not

a little proud of his maritime honours, he returned to Wales, on a visit to his parents. Here he remained for some time, the oracle of the village. The young men, as they flocked round him to hear the wonderful narrative of his voyages, admired the splendour of his blue coat, and milk-white lappels: and secretly comparing them with their own russet frocks, would frequently heave the sigh of envy, and wish for pleasures "which they knew not of."—But Mr. Ackland was not born to shine merely in so contracted a sphere. He had received from nature an excellent understanding, which, in the intervals of leisure, that a sea life always affords, he had improved by close application. He read books and
men

men with equal discernment. From the most refined of his brother-officers, he had learnt all the arts of engagement; and his address was the address of a gentleman. Accomplishments like these, naturally introduced him to the best families in the neighbourhood, among which was that of Mr. Mortimer. He saw the charming Catharine, and that you know, Colonel, was enough! He caught fire,—he blazed in an instant! It is not wonderful, that Miss Mortimer should look upon a lover of this cast with something more than indifference. In a word, they soon became the tenderest of lovers that ever figured in romance. Unfortunately however, Mr. Ackland, during the fascination into which the charms of
Miss

Miss Mortimer had thrown him, had forgotten entirely the great disparity there was between them, both of birth and fortune. But, as soon as he was a little recovered, he stumbled on this fatal obstacle to his happiness. He found that Mr. Mortimer was, of all men, the most tenacious of family honours. He was himself descended from one of the most ancient families in Wales. For six hundred years backwards he could trace an AP in his pedigree. He had frequently been heard to say, that his daughter should not accept of any thing beneath a title.—Besides this imaginary wealth, he possessed a real estate of near a thousand a year; the moiety of which, he had often declared, he would give to Catharine,

C

on

on the day of her marriage. On the other hand, Mr. Ackland well knew that his own pedigree and rent-roll did not reach beyond the margin of his commission. In such a desperate case, what were these unfortunate lovers to do? They consulted each other—They agreed, that to obtain Mr. Mortimer's consent to the match was impracticable; and, that to attempt it would be madness. The only alternative left was a private marriage.—A private marriage was the very thing that suited the genius of young Ackland. He liked it, because it was enterprising, uncommon, romantic.—Without a thought of the dreadful consequences that must necessarily follow, this wild project was put into practice. It was not, however,
long,

long, before they waked from their trance, and began to find out the danger of their situation. They were aware that a discovery of their marriage, must, sooner or later, take place. When this should happen, the resentment, the cruelty of Mr. Mortimer, would be insupportable. The only means of eluding his vengeance was by an elopement. But whither could they fly? The dreadful phantoms of misery, disgrace and poverty, surround them on all sides. — At length, young Ackland struck out a scheme, which he fondly imagined would release them from their embarrassment. During his station in the English channel, he had formerly cultivated an acquaintance with a gentleman in the mercantile line, in the island

of Guernsey, who, struck with his abilities, and spirit of enterprize, had offered to take him into partnership, on condition, that he would quit the Navy, and take an active part in the business. As soon as this circumstance occurred to his memory, he mentioned it to Catharine; He intimated his design of going immediately to Guernsey, in order to settle preliminaries, and prepare for her reception. To one of young Ackland's sanguine disposition, the prospect became at once a reality. He persuaded Catharine, that their troubles were nearly at an end. The sweets of a mercantile life, he described with ardor and enthusiasm. He painted the beauties of the Island in the most enchanting colours. In short, by a
happy

happy force of imagination, he found himself already settled, as a principal Merchant, in Guernsey.

It was on the very day that Mr. Ackland set off, with intention to realize all these dreams of happiness, that Sir Edmund Chetwyn, on his return from a tour through Wales, stopped at Llaughlerna-Abbey, to view a famous statue of Andromeda, in Mr. Mortimer's gardens. He was in raptures both with the design and the execution of the figure, and declared it to be the most finished work of art he had hitherto seen. But before he departed, Mr. Mortimer, unluckily, shewed him a piece that was designed by a superior artist. The elegant, the blooming Catharine, was

presented to him with all her resistless charms, just as they had received the last beautiful polish from the hand of Nature. Sir Edmund beheld the figure like a true virtuoso. As he stood, rapt in amazement, his eyes wandered over all its beauties: while ever and anon, he burst into violent, involuntary gusts of admiration. What followed you already know: I have, therefore, only to add, that my unhappy friend, at present, is anxiously waiting Mr. Ackland's return. — Mean time, knowing that a discovery of her real situation, considering the irritable and implacable temper of Mr. Mortimer, would be attended with the most fatal consequences, she has thought it adviseable, in order to elude detection, to name a day for her

her union with Sir Edmund. As Mr. Ackland, who alone can find means to relieve her from her distress, is expected to arrive every hour, I do not think this a despicable stratagem. Should he not, however, return in time, the result must be dreadful indeed!—

With respect to myself, knowing my affection for Miss Mortimer, you will not be surpris'd at this awful change in my spirits. I have lost all title to your old appellation of *whimsical*. Melancholy is now my only companion: she is, for ever, thrusting her gorgon face into my presence. It is in vain that I attempt to get rid of so disagreeable a companion. I find myself in the situation of one of those *pleasant*

C 4

dreamers,

dreamers, who are always getting into the company of frightful monsters, from which they strive heartily to run away, but, by a sort of enchantment, are unable to stir a single step.

LETTER IV.

SIR EDMUND CHETWYN,

TO

ARTHUR COLLINS, ESQUIRE.

ARTHUR! thou art a comical fellow. The bait you sent was an excellent one to catch a Welchman. I held it out to Mr. Mortimer; He snapped at it with eagerness,

eagerness, and was hooked in an instant.

A seat in parliament! — Why this was the very summit of his ambition.—No sooner did I begin to touch the key, than his heart beat in concord with every note. But when I came to make him an offer of the Borough. Zounds, Sir, he branched into such an *ad libitum*.—It was a cadence of joy, after a pause of astonishment. This was the proper time to expatiate on the cruel insensibility of his beautiful daughter; and to complain, that my happiness had been so long delayed. Mr. Mortimer understood me perfectly, —and, in the gratitude of his heart, he swore, that in spite of all opposition, or obstinacy, the ceremony

remony should inevitably take place within a fortnight.

I give you this early intelligence that you may be prepared to make me all due congratulations, and to write my *epithalamium*.

LETTER V.

FROM THE SAME.

DID not I always tell thee, Arthur, that there was a conspiracy against me?—But I have made a glorious discovery. The letter which I here send enclosed, I intercepted, by a stratagem, that perhaps could not have been improved

proved, even by your wonderful sagacity. Pray send me your comments upon this curious epistle. What think you of a *rival*, Arthur? Why, who would have thought that this sweet, innocent young lady, this paragon of modesty and bashfulness, was a woman of such admirable assurance? An elopement to Guernsey!—Was there ever so wild an adventure? — Never say that Miss Mortimer is not a girl of spirit. “Excellent wench! perdition catch me, but I do love her,” And therefore, Arthur, I will take care to insure her happiness by defeating the measures of my rival. Will it not be laughable to see this Guernsey Adonis, arrive for the purpose of *celebrating his nuptials* five days after the lady has been married

married to another?—And yet this will be exactly the case; for to-morrow makes her mine for ever. Do not fail to keep the enclosed letter a profound secret. Make your heart merry with the joke, but clap a padlock on your tongue.

LETTER VI.

Guernsey.

IT is with infinite satisfaction I inform my dearest Catharine, that my design has succeeded, even beyond my very flattering expectations. Having some necessary business to transact, I cannot appear at Llaughlarn Abbey in less than six days: In mean while, I am taking

king

king measures to make your flight successful, and your reception at this place as agreeable to you as possible. Our trials, our misfortunes are now over. — Adieu, my only friend! — When next we meet we will never again be separated.

A*****.

LETTER VII.

THE HONOURABLE MISS PERCIVAL

T O

COLONEL HARLEY.

THE catastrophe of this tragedy (for such I fear it will turn out) is drawing on apace.

Th

The plot thickens, — and the face of things, every hour, wears a more gloomy aspect. Three weeks have now passed since Catharine, through motives of prudence, was induced to name the day for her nuptials. But, to her infinite grief and amazement, in all this time she has neither seen nor heard from Mr. Ackland. This circumstance is really unaccountable. If, through some unforeseen casualty, Mr. Ackland was prevented from returning so soon as he expected (though he knew nothing of the dreadful affair that has happened since his departure) he surely might have written a single line to quiet our fears respecting himself; and he certainly *ought* to have done it. This negligence, — this unfeeling and unmanly conduct,

conduct, is but an ill return for all that my unhappy friend has suffered on his account. If he has not met with some FATAL accident,—If he exists on the face of the earth, he must be a monster of ingratitude and infidelity. But he is *married*, you know, Colonel, and that, I suppose is a sufficient excuse for his inattention. Why, Sir, he has worn his shackles three long months, and surely it is time that they should be a little loosened. I cannot look upon such cruelty with an ordinary degree of patience. I feel a spirit of indignation,—of resentment. If he survive, I hope some storm will overtake him, on his return, and overwhelm him in the waves.

What

What can be done? To-morrow is the fatal day. Preparations are making for the wedding. Sir Edmund continues fervent and sanguine; Mr. Mortimer, resolute and inflexible.

LETTER VIII.

ARTHUR COLLINS, ESQUIRE,

TO

SIR EDMUND CHETWYN.

THEN it is certainly a fact, Edmund, that thou art on the threshold of "happiness." But, beware how you take the last step. Why, man, thou art entirely unacquainted

unacquainted with the perils of a Welch wedding. You know not that the three first days are dedicated to the rites of Bacchus ; and all this time, old Hymen himself, extinguishes his torch, and becomes, what Horace calls, a hair-brain'd, ranting, roaring fellow. If you have any regard to your health, come into England to be married.

Mr. Dryden and myself have condescended to write your epithalamium, which, without doubt, will soon become popular on the mountains!

EPITHALAMIUM.

'T WAS at a noble feast, in Cambria,
 won
 By Chetwyn's love struck son,
 Aloft, in awkward state,
 The am'rous hero satè;
 A band of Welchmen plac'd around.

Their brows with leeks and onions crown'd:
 Fair Catharine, a lovely bride,
 Sat blushing, by Sir Edmund's side,
 In flower of youth and beauty's pride.

The admiring crowd now swell the lofty
 sound,
 And lo! the fretted roofs rebound:
 "Happy, happy, happy pair,
 "None but the *prave*,
 "None but the *prave*,
 "None but the *prave* deserves the fair.

Sir

Sir Edmund hears
 And, like a god
 Affects to nod,
 And shakes his ravish'd ears.

With downcast eyes the lovely Catharine sat,
 Revolving in her melting soul,
 The various turns of chance below;
 And quickly from the crowd she stole,
 And tears of joy began to flow.

The praise of *Taffy* next was sung,
 Of *Taffy* ever fair and young;
 Sound your pipes and *kettle* drums
 Now give the *bag-pipes* breath—he comes!
 —he comes!

Leek crown'd *Taffy*, smelling strong,
 Flush'd with pimpled grace,
 He shews his comic face,
Taffy's blessings sure are treasure,
 Drinking is the Welchman's pleasure,
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain!

The youth admir'd the jovial strain,
 And laugh'd, and drank,
 Laugh'd and drank,
 Drank and laugh'd, and drank again :
 At length, with harmony and wine oppress'd,
 The vanquish'd hero sunk to rest.

Now blow the droning pipes again,
 A louder yet, and yet a louder strain !
 Break his bands of sleep asunder,
 And rouse him like a ratt'ling peal of thunder !
 Hark ! the horrid sound
 Has rais'd up his head ;
 As awak'd from the dead,
 And amaz'd he stares round.

Behold a reeling band,
 Each a glass in his hand,
 These are the youths that unconquer'd re-
 main,
 And still the bowl can drain,
 Whilst prostrate hosts remain,
 Inglorious on the plain.

Give glory due
To the valiant crew:

Behold how they toss their beavers on high,
How they, rallying, point to the chamber
abodes,
And shout and supplicate the nuptial gods.

The bridegroom hears their clamours with
delight,
Seizes a lighted taper, and vanishes from
fight!—

LETTER IX.

THE HONORABLE MISS PERCIVAL,

TO

COLONEL HARLEY.

IN good faith, Colonel, you are
a strange, officious, trouble-
some creature. Yet I *must* satisfy
your

your impertinent curiosity. In a word, then, Catharine, my sweet friend, is in safety: Sir Edmund and Mr. Mortimer are outstripped in their politics; my melancholy has taken its leave; and—I am myself again.

But I suppose you will have the insolence to pretend, that you do not understand this rhapsody. — Well, Sir, I will attempt to bear good fortune more soberly. I know how delightfully calm, and composed; how exquisitely dull your feelings are, on most interesting occasions. If, therefore, you will lay down that News-paper, over which you have been poring so many hours, I will endeavour to make my story quite agreeable to you,
by

by adopting the grave and methodical stile of the learned editor.

At ten o'clock, on the evening previous to the intended marriage, all hopes of Mr. Ackland's arrival being given up, the honourable Miss Percival was summoned to Catharine's dressing-room, in order to join in a private consultation, on the best means of avoiding the impending evil. The council consisted of Miss Percival, her friend, and a smart, intriguing waiting woman. The *debate* was opened, in a very spirited manner by the latter; who, in the true Cambrian dialect, inveighed, with great warmth and feeling, against the cruelty of parents, and the infidelity of lovers. After enumerating

rating the various difficulties that lay in the way of unfortunate females, dangers which they are obliged to encounter, and difficulties which they must surmount, before they arrive to the honourable state of marriage. She related a variety of lamentable facts, which had come within her own immediate knowledge. In the present instance, however, she was happy in being able to declare, and she had not a doubt but the honourable visitor, and her beloved young lady would entirely agree with her, that although there were very formidable appearances of difficulty and embarrassment, yet the means of redress were still within their own power. Her unhappy mistress had suffered much from the cruelty and insolence

insolence of the other sex. She had given her hand to a man who was highly undeserving of such a blessing;—to a man who had treated her with the most mortifying neglect, if not with absolute contempt. What made her situation still more lamentable was, that she retained the most sincere affection for her destroyer. But the evil did not stop here; for she was now to be pestered with the addresses of a most contemptible fop. For her own part, she had (although she was now but a servant) seen much of the world: and had studied *characters*. But this Baronet was, to her, a perfect riddle,—a skain which she could not, with all her skill, unravel.—Before she had the honour to live in the family, she had been on the

Welch

Welch Stage four years, and had played in all the principal towns with great success. She had often seen Wildings, and Lord Foppington's, but a Sir Edmund Chetwyn was a perfect original. She had, for several years past, constantly read the London News-Papers to her Master, every night after supper;—She had studied the debates in Parliament, and could always see thro' the intrigues of statesmen and ministers,—but the plots of Sir Edmund were too dark for her keenest penetration.—She, however, begged pardon of the ladies for wandering from her subject. What she intended to say, was, that she was a *Welch-woman*,—that the best blood of her ancestors had been spilt in support of liberty, and that
 she,

she, as an individual, would always oppose *arbitrary power*. That, therefore, she could not, patiently, look upon the persecution, and disposition of Mr. Mortimer. A noble opportunity now offered itself, by which all that gentleman's measures might, at once, be frustrated, and all grievances redressed. The ladies would easily conceive, that she meant to advise her beloved mistress to save herself, by an honourable and precipitate *retreat*.—This scheme, she hoped, would be found a good one; and nothing was necessary to insure its success, but that all present should enter into the *true spirit* of adventure. The present moment was the time for the execution of this design. Every circumstance was favourable—The hour

hour was late,—It was moonlight,—Mr. Mortimer and Sir Edmund were drinking in the parlour below, in perfect security; most of the servants were at rest, and those that were not, she had privately won over to her interest. In short, she would move for an immediate elopement.

The honourable Miss Percival, after a most elegant exordium, in which she praised, in the highest strain of panegyric, the abilities and eloquence of the last ingenious speaker, owned, that for herself, she was but ill qualified for the discussion of the subject; and that her remarks would certainly be feeble, and uninteresting, after what had just been thrown out with so much feeling, and force of expression. She could
not,

not, however, entirely agree with the eloquent domestic. She hoped it would be believed, that she was as great an enemy to *arbitrary power* as any one, when it was exercised by the *other* sex. That such a power had lately *increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished*. No body was a warmer advocate for female priviledges than herself; but, at the same time, she was an advocate for female delicacy and decorum. An elopement had been proposed, and recommended with great ardour; but surely the ingenious speaker had forgotten the innumerable casualties and dangers that would be incidental to such a step. She dwelt much on this point, and was about to describe the variety of distresses that would, of course, follow such

a misguided adventure, when she was interrupted by the former speaker, who answered all her objections with great spirit and acuteness. She launched forth into a wide field of discussion, in which, however we are not able to follow her, with any degree of precision. Therefore,—with your permission, Colonel!—we will here drop our Editorship, and proceed to the plain matter of fact.

It was at length agreed that an elopement was not only prudent, and adviseable, but that it was the only possible means left, by which, my fair friend's destruction could be prevented. But here our feminine council was thrown into a fresh dilemma. A flight had been determined

mined upon; but whither was the unhappy sufferer to fly?—Where was she to hide herself from Mr. Mortimer's resentment?—If she sought a refuge among her friends, or relations, a discovery would be the immediate consequence. And how could she, a weak, unexperienced female, with all the tenderness, with all the extreme delicacy and refinement of her sex, trust herself among strangers? Could she mix with the promiscuous crowd, and submit to all the rudeness and insult of the unfeeling vulgar? Although these objections had not, at first, occurred to us, they now wore a most formidable aspect. But they were, at last, over ruled by our female privy counsellor, whose fertility of invention rose superior

perior to every difficulty. Her father, a poor cottager, occupies a few acres of land, belonging to Mr. Mortimer, not above five miles distant from Llaughlern Abbey. The cottage in which he lives, is situated near the sea side, at the bottom of a mountain, under shelter of a large wood. This place, she thought would prove, in all respects, an eligible retreat for the unfortunate Catharine. The old man would be proud to afford her his protection; and here she might remain in perfect security until some sort of intelligence was received from Mr. Ackland. It was true, she said, the whole country would be ransacked, every corner of which was known to Mr. Mortimer; and that he would probably be led by his

his suspicions to visit her father's cottage. But she would undertake to assure us, that his search would be fruitless; for there was a small hut in the thick woods, behind her father's house, where Catharine would be securely hidden. In this hut, she had, herself, with most of her family, lived for many weeks together. It had been built for the reception of smuggled goods; and so closely was it surrounded by thickset tufts of trees, shrubs, and brambles, that there was no way to it, except by two narrow passages; one of which led from the garden of the cottage, its entrance being concealed beneath a thick hedge;—and the other was a narrow road, that led towards the sea shore. It had been made for the convenience.

Vol. I. E

ence of removing goods from the vessels, and its entrance was also carefully hidden.

This plan, thus struck out, improved, and completed in the true spirit of enterprize, was immediately adopted. it was agreed, that a moment of time ought not to be lost, but that my friend (as her dress, and other necessary articles could afterwards be conveyed to her privately) should instantly make her retreat, accompanied by her confidante and counsellor, who, to avoid suspicion, was to return early this morning to the Abbey.

Accordingly (for on this occasion, Colonel, I cannot avoid being poetical) last night, at that still and solemn

solemn hour when ghosts are said to glide from their Church-yard tombs; and fairies to gambol and frolic over the surface of the earth, did the lovely timorous Catharine leave her father's house; and while the pale moon, silvering the tops of the high grass, beneath her feet, lighted her on her way through thickets, heaths and meadows, the twinkling stars peeped from the arched sky, and seemed to wink at her flight; while the dewy trees dropped tears for her departure.

LETTER

LETTER X.

FROM THE SAME.

I HAVE seen an admirable farce performed this morning. It has put me into the merriest mood imaginable, and made me wild as the winds. Ha! ha! ha! what a charming jest! Poor Sir Edmund—poor, unfortunate gentleman! Oh! Colonel, what would you have given to have seen him, this morning, a perfect Adonis, drest out by the hand of fashion; fringed powdered, and bespangled,—to have seen him, swimming thro the breakfast room, with all the grace of a Chesterfield, dealing out such a profusion of bon-mots, and witticisms, as to strike with

with astonishment the gaping curate who attended, to perform the rites. How did he rally both himself and the approaching ceremony, while, every moment, he expected the entry of his charming bride, blushing, trembling and embarrassed. At this very crisis, intelligence was brought that Miss Mortimer was not to be found; and presently afterwards, by a second messenger, we were informed, that she had certainly absconded. The scene shifted in a moment.—It was so ludicrous, so perfectly original in the comic way, that I am at a loss even to say what it was like. You have seen a pantomime, where all the characters are playing a thousand extravagant tricks, but no one attempts to speak. We were just

such a group. The welch blood of Mr. Mortimer boiled like a furnace. Rage dashed his cheeks with scarlet. The pangs of the gout were all forgotten :—He jumped hastily from his seat, and limped out of the room, like a lame Hotspur. Mr. Llynapgruffyn, another Welch gentleman, who attended for the purpose of giving away the bride, frowned at the indignity offered him, and clapping his hands behind him, stalked away, not unlike the ghost of Prince Prettyman. The curate, disappointed in the loss of his fees, gave a loud whistle, and followed Mr. Llynapgruffyn, humming an old song. “ But who can paint the lover as he stood?”

“ Care

"Care fate on his faded cheek, but under
brows

"Of dauntless courage and considerate pride,
"Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast
"Signs of remorse and passion."

As for myself, I was stamping, raving, dying with laughter; and I have been, ever since, so pleasant, and so impertinent on the subject of the elopement, that I am justly suspected of being in the secret. The whole house is an universal uproar. There is such a clattering of consonants, such a war of *bwrdds*, *bwms*, and *fwyns*, that I am continually reminded of the building of Babel. I shall leave this scene of confusion to-morrow morning, and have ready intimated my design to Mr.

E 4

Mortimer.

Mortimer. He received my apology with great coolness, and solemnity; frowning and biting his lips, which itched to pronounce words that he dared not suffer them to utter. Otherwise, he would certainly have charged me, in the spirit of true Cambrian politeness, with seducing his daughter from his house, and from her duty.

In a few days I shall be at Bath, where I expect you will meet me. I cannot appear, even on the parade, or in the pump-room, without a knight errant. So, in the mean time, you may practise some of your old compliments over again, and try to smoothe the deep furrows of your face with smiles.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

CATHARINE,

T O

THE HONOURABLE MISS PERCIVAL

IT will give my dearest friend some satisfaction, to hear, that I am safely arrived at my destined retreat. I am now perfectly secure; and being secluded from all the world, have leisure to brood over my sorrows. I have already written to Mr. Ackland, to acquaint him with my situation, not only entreating him to assign a reason for his unexampled conduct, but imploring him, in the most submissive and affectionate manner, to afford

afford me some sort of assistance. I have assured him, and with truth assured him, that, notwithstanding what has past, he is not yet estranged from my bosom; but that, unaccountable as it may appear, my affection has even increased, in proportion to his cruelty; and should he now have no pity on my sorrows, should he still continue unfeeling and merciless, yet my heart can never forget him, until his repeated injuries shall burst it asunder.

You, my dear Charlotte, will not, I fear, much applaud this procedure. After the inhuman treatment I have suffered, you will call it the very height of weakness and folly. You will talk of the dignity of the sex, and of acting with more
courage,

courage, and with a higher sense of my own character. Alas! my dear friend, this is the common language of those who know to boast but cannot feel. Believe me, the dignity of the sex has little to do with the *heart*. There is another sort of language which you, perhaps, in the levity of your disposition, may brand with the name of cowardice. I mean, not absolutely a patient submission to injuries; but a struggle against them, so steady and uniform, that it will not suffer you to go beyond your strength. This is the kind of courage, in which I shall persist, like a skilful fighter, who receives violent blows, and even runs from his adversary, in hopes of exhausting his strength, and conquering at last.

My

My retirement is infinitely more agreeable than you can imagine. The old man treats me with the affection of a father. It is true, I do not "feast on luxuries," but without the superfluities, I enjoy most of the comforts of nature: I am now shut up from all the world,—a perfect recluse. Nor do I ever see the face of a human being, except that of my venerable host, who, three times a day, brings me my wholesome meal of milk and vegetables. The situation of my little hut is beautiful beyond your conception. It is built under a knot of birch-trees, on the side of a hanging wood. Around my abode there is a green space, where the trees and bushes have been cleared away; and this delightful spot is, every
where

where, bounded by thick hazels, beeches, and forest-alders, except only in front, opposite to the door of the hut, where a wide arch has been cut in the branches of the trees, through which you have a charming view of the sea shore, at the bottom of the mountain, and of the surrounding country. The arch, I am informed, was made by smugglers, who formerly inhabited the hut, for the purpose of watching the arrival of their vessels on the coast. The scenery, which (by approaching near to the end of the avenue) you may see through, is extremely beautiful. The huge rocks that, for several miles, stretch along the shore, on the left; the ruins of old castles and bridges that are scattered over a woody mountain

tain on the right ; In the front, a green sloping vale, with its winding roads that lead down to the sea-side ; and beyond it the broad ocean, over which, ships are continually passing, whose white sails appear like specks upon the distant horizon,—all together, form a landscape, romantic and full of grandeur.

The interior of my little dwelling is not less remarkable for simplicity, than the outside for luxuriance and picturesque beauty. The whole of my furniture is composed of a truckle-bed and a small deal table. I am now writing on the latter, and at this moment, you must envy me. It is a delightful spring morning—I am now at the door of
my

my hut,—the sun, just rising out of the distant ocean, darts his rays obliquely upwards, and tips with light the green tops of the birch-trees, under which I am sitting. The blue violet, and the pale primrose, spring beneath my feet, breathing around the sweetest odours: while, close by my side, a thrush, hidden among the boughs, salutes the rising morn with the sweetest accents. The various trees and shrubs that grow around me, bring to my recollection some descriptive lines of Mr. Congreve.

Here tall Chaonian oaks their branches spread,
While weeping poplars, there, erect their
head;

The foodful Esculus here shoots his leaves,
That turf, soft lime trees; this, fat beech
receives.

64 CATHARINE.

Here brittle hazels, laurels here advance,
 And there tough ash to form the hero's lance:
 Here silver firs, with knotless trunks ascend,
 There, scarlet oaks, beneath their branches
 bend.

That spot admits the hospitable plane,
 On this the maple grows with clouded grain:
 Here wat'ry willows are with Lotus seen,
 There Tamarisk and Box for ever green.
 With pliant feet, now Ivies this way wind,
 Vines yonder rise, and Elms with Vines en-
 twin'd;

Wild Ormus now, the pitch tree next takes
 root,

And Arbatus, adorn'd with blushing fruit:
 Then easy bending Palms, the victor's prize,
 And Pines erect with bristly tops arise.

Here then, my dear friend, is a
 spot well suited to contemplation.
 Here, I have sufficient leisure to
 correct my desires,—and here, by
 being continually exercised in re-
 flection,

fection, I learn to bear my misfortunes with some degree of fortitude. I have taken an impartial review of my past conduct; and finding that I can look back with satisfaction, I am determined to look forward with hope.

You will, perhaps, wonder how I can employ my time in this solitude. I know not how it is, but I experience very few moments of mere langour, or inactivity. There are many objects around me, on which I can employ my attention. To mark the progress of buds and blossoms, into green leaves and fruit. To see the streams trickle from the rocks and dash down the precipices. To watch majestic oaks, in vain stretching their broad arms towards

each other, to form a shade, while the sun pierces through their thickest branches, and spreads a kind of net-work over the high grass and wood flowers below: — To clip the luxuriant branches of wild shrubs, and woodbines that creep around my hut. These are amusements, at least, as rational as those which prevail in more tumultuous scenes. I don't mean to say that these natural beauties have inclined me to despise the works of art. You know I was always extremely fond of drawing. My situation affords me an excellent opportunity of improving myself in that practice. Having taken care to have my colours and pencils conveyed to me, I am continually making sketches of rocks, trees, cascades, and other
picturesque

picturesque objects. Although I am confined to a narrow spot, I have a view of the surrounding country, which furnishes an infinite variety of subjects; and a very little alteration in the fore ground always affords a new picture. Sometimes I endeavour to improve nature. A tree, or a rock, that would be ill placed I take the liberty of removing from my composition. For the back-grounds of my landscapes, I have before me the most beautiful and majestic objects. At the door of my hut, I can sit and copy the vessels floating on the ocean; the rude umbrage fringing the steep craggy rocks on one side of me, on the other, the white sheep hanging on the mountains. These, with a green valley sprinkled over with

straggling trees, and feeding cattle, are scenes which for ever present themselves to my enraptured eye.

But, besides drawing, I have other employments to fill up my time. Two oaken shelves at the corner of my little habitation, are filled with books that have been privately sent to me, by my faithful and favourite servant. Reading, which was always my amusement, is now my constant employment. From the effusions of poetry, and, in particular pastoral poetry, I now draw unusual pleasure: since, by comparing the descriptions of poets with the various objects around me, I am incessantly struck with beauties, which I never before discovered.

These

These employments serve to blunt the edge of my sorrows.— Whatever calamities may befall me in future, I am determined to support them without complaining: for in the words of a favourite Author, whom I have just been reading, “If what we suffer has been brought on by ourselves, patience is eminently our duty, since no one ought to be angry at feeling that which he deserves. If we are conscious that we have not contributed to our own sufferings, if punishment falls upon innocence, or disappointment happens to industry and prudence, patience, whether necessary or not, is much easier, since our pain is then without aggravation, and we have not the bitterness of remorse

70 CATHARINE.

to add to the asperity of misfortune."

LETTER XII.

SIR EDMUND CHETWYN,

TO

ARTHUR COLLINS, ESQUIRE.

SAY no more, Arthur. Thou wert never intended for a moralist. Your philosophical jargon is the very height of absurdity, if not of insult. You are not surely serious, when you preach up the efficacy of patience in the cold language of a white-headed Stoic. I tell you, once more, I am most egregiously

egregiously duped; and, what is worse, I am duped by a woman,— a mere country wench, although a beautiful one. These rustics are certainly possessed of more cunning than your town-bred women of fashion. Well! I have, at least, immortalized myself, my glorious exploits will certainly be recorded in the annals of the Pantheon. Am not I a precious silly fellow, to quit the fashionable circles in town, where I had been so successful, and where I was supposed to be a greater adept in the science of intrigue than ever was the illustrious Machiavel himself; to come into Wales, where, having hid myself more than three months among the mountains, and all this time laying close siege to a simple country girl, — after comparing

paring her to all the Deities of Homer,—after feeding her with wit, and fine verses, and lavishing upon her all the charms of flattery; nay, after absolutely consenting to marry her,—I find myself as completely tricked as ever was a country 'squire in the province of St. James's. My deity has fled, and I am left to embrace a cloud, instead of a goddess. Pray, Arthur, be so civil as to tell me, the best method by which I can beat out my silly brains, that I may avoid the jibes, jests and jokes, that would certainly be flung in my face, if I should ever again dare to make my appearance in town.

Is not my case truly ridiculous?
and yet am I not able to get rid of
my absurd partiality for this charming
ing

ing insensible. I must have her yet,
 for without her I cannot exist, nor
 will I ever leave these mountains
 'till she is found. Like Hudibras

"I'll carve her name on barks of trees,
 "With true-love knots and flourishes."

Ha! ha! ha! — how contemptible
 do I appear to myself! — I dare not
 reflect. Why, Sir, I make as ab-
 surd a figure as the heroes of a
 dozen romances, all drawn out, and
 mustered together; and to speak in
 the language of those excellent com-
 positions, I have *lost my heart*. Ha!
 ha! ha! how sweetly insipid! But I
 have lost more than my heart, for
 I have lost the charmer who is in
 possession of it; nay, more than that,
 I have lost one of the best Boroughs
 in Devonshire. There is the rub,
 Arthur.

Arthur. The election will take place in the course of a few days. Several of my friends have expressed a desire to become *purchasers*.— Cannot you hit upon some stratagem, by which I may prevent Mr. Mortimer's success? It is true, I have promised him the Borough: But, on the other hand, has he not promised *me* his daughter?— The treaty has not been made good on his part, and why should it be ratified on mine? He was not, indeed, privy to his daughter's elopement. It is not his fault that she has changed her mind: neither would it be mine, if the electors of H— were to change theirs. This is a very important matter. Pray, my friend, set your wits to work, and think seriously of some remedy. I hear

hear you are going to Bath. You will meet there a whimsical, rattling old maid, who, yet, has more sense than a dozen women ought to possess. She is, however, my most inveterate enemy: For, to her alone, I attribute entirely my cursed disappointment. You have before heard me talk of the honourable Miss Percival. She has lately been here, upon a visit to Catharine, and was as I am informed, the first who advised her to elope. She is, without doubt, well acquainted with the secret haunts of the lovely fugitive.

Now, Arthur, although I have premised, that she has more wit than a dozen women, yet *you* certainly hold a greater share of that valuable commodity, than has been possessed

possessed by a score of the shrewdest old maids that have appeared since the days of Queen Elizabeth ; so that the balance is greatly in your favour. Now, if you are not afraid to attack this Quixotte in petticoats, you may easily extract the secrets of her friend from her windmill-brain. You will find it no difficult matter to approach her ; neither will it hurt your conscience (for she is really a fine woman) to profess yourself her warmest admirer. There is no great logic required, in making love to an old maid.— You have only to swear, point blank, that you have seen her register, and that she is under five and twenty. Her vanity instantly runs away with her senses ; in spite of herself she is compelled to believe you ;

you; and your business is done for ever. On the present occasion, indeed, you will be obliged to challenge, and, if he resists, to cut the throat of a little, sonnetteering, half-pay Colonel. But this will be but mere matter of amusement. At all events don't fail to find out some tidings of Miss Mortimer; for, after all, I am not able to wean myself from this bewitching girl. I am determined to pursue her with the most obstinate perseverance..

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Island of Guernsey.

HOW shall I express my amazement, at the information I received from your letter? It is impossible, my dearest friend, that you can suspect me of dissimulation, or treachery. You know not how my heavy heart beats with sorrow in your absence; — You know not how anxiously I wait the hour, in which, I am again to see your face. But why do I talk of myself? Your distresses alone, demand all my attention. The unaccountable incidents that have happened since my departure from Llaughlern-Abbey, almost exceed
my

my belief. I am, however, now, too much agitated to expatiate upon them. Let me hasten to tell you, my only friend, that I am well acquainted with the situation of your retreat, and will come to your immediate assistance and relief. My business here, after much more difficulty than was expected, is at length completed. The necessary arrangements are made, and my friends in this Island expect you with impatience. I have now only to consult on the most adviseable means of bringing you from the coast, with convenience and safety. Already I anticipate the joys of meeting.—The idea of beholding you again, makes every doubt and every difficulty vanish.—Support your sufferings with courage but a few

80 CATHARINE.

few days longer, and do not, for heaven's sake, do not add to our misfortunes, already too severe, by charging me with neglect or falsehood. I find, my sweet friend, you are yet unacquainted with *my heart*. I will perish rather than deceive you!——

G. Ackland.

LETTER XIV.

THE HONORABLE MISS PERCIVAL,

TO

CATHARINE.

Bath.

IT is really true then, Catharine, that you are ALMOST happy in your present situation: and that you would willingly pass your whole life in solitude, and retirement.— Why, my dear child, if you go on thus, you will certainly make a figure in the historic page. The poets and philosophers will be greatly obliged to you, for realizing their fantastic dreams. You have already

Vol. I. G made

made nearly as much progress in Philosophy, as the famous Roman Sage (by the bye, I believe he was an Irishman) who found out that he was never so much in company as when he was alone. But you go far beyond him in your extravagant notions of solitude; and I expect you will next tell me, that having corrected your palate, you can make an excellent meal on a dish of roots, berries, and dried leaves: and that, being determined to relinquish all intercourse with society, you must beg leave to decline having any further commerce with myself, in common with the rest of your fellow creatures.

But, seriously, it gives me infinite pleasure to find, that you have courage

rage to sustain, without repining, the inconveniencies and hardships of your confinement, until some change for the better may take place: And I promise you, that such a change will very soon occur, for I am concerting measures for your private removal to Berkley-Square. I shall send Colonel Harley with proper attendants to escort you to Bristol, where I will meet and accompany you to town. If he does not go upon this private expedition with alacrity, and execute the orders I shall give him with judgment and success, I shall try him by a female court-martial, and turn him out of my service. So that you have only to keep up your spirits till he arrives with his reinforcement.

I am really charmed with the description of your little mansion. I often wish to sit with you, under the Birch-trees at your door; or to wander with you, arm in arm, through the green alley that leads down to the sea-side, and cull primroses, violets and wild sucklings. Neglect not to preserve all your sketches, and drawings, with which I shall be infinitely delighted. I am pleased with your rapturousally, in praise of pastoral poetry; but I think few of our English poets have succeeded in this species of composition, in which, indeed, *none* of them can dispute the palm with the Italians. If you will forgive my impertinent criticism, I'll tell you why. Our *pastoral* poetry is generally straitned and unnatural; it exceeds

ceeds the bounds not only of probability, but of common sense. Pastoral poetry should present to us the real manners of the country,—its best manners, to be sure. It ought, therefore to be chaste and simple; and to give us such ideas only, as retirement, innocence and virtue naturally suggest. It is now become little more than a shewy compound of fiction and absurdity. There are, it is true, many liberties allowed to verse that are not extended to the mere prose writer. That kind of poetry, particularly, which is addressed to the imagination, assumes a licence peculiar to itself. It creates new worlds, and new ranks of beings. The poet may bring down his angels and fairies from above, and raise as many demons as

he pleases from below, and by a succession of wonders he may captivate our attention, and even excite our admiration ; but surely, my dear, it is highly ridiculous for the describer of *pastoral* scenes, thus to launch forth into the marvelous and supernatural. I cannot, with any degree of patience, hear a lover seriously tell his Mistress, that her absence has caused whole rivers to dry up, and the most verdant woods to fade at once and lose all their bloom : Nor do I see why he should gain credit merely because he tells her so in verse.—But I beg your pardon.—What can be more tender and moving, than to see a whole forest bend and weep, or a great *be-mountain* shake his head and groan at the departure of a beautiful

beautiful young shepherds? Is not this true pathetic? And are not we too inclined to sigh and to weep?

But enough of this criticism,—
The Colonel, who, you know, is a dangler after the Muses, shall hereafter assist us to discuss the subject. You may expect, within a week, to see his little round face peeping between the boughs of your alders and hazels. Meanwhile, I desire you will weave me a little wicker work-basket from the woodbine that grows round your hut, which I will hang high in my dressing-room, as a memorial of your romantic seclusion.

LETTER XV.

GEORGE ACKLAND,

TO

CATHARINE.

Island of Guernsey.

AFTER the receipt of this Letter, my dearest Catharine may expect to see me every hour. I have hired a small smuggling vessel with five seamen, and in a short time I shall leave this Port, and steer directly towards the Welch coast, where (if I have not forgotten the situation of the place) we can land within half a mile of your retreat. You will be prepared to fly for succour into the arms of him, who holds you dearer than his existence.

I have used every precaution that may tend to the success of our enterprize. You will, without doubt, be upon the watch for my appearance on the coast. To prevent the possibility of a mistake, immediately upon our coming in sight, I will hoist a red flag on the mast of the vessel. This signal of my approach will be a joyful sight to my beloved Catharine. Adieu, my dear friend!—In a few hours we shall be united for ever. Remember the red flag on the mast. Once more a short adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

CATHARINE,

TO

THE HONOURABLE MISS PERCIVAL.

YOU will immediately prevent Colonel Harley's intended journey. I must decline your offer, my Charlotte, but I cannot apologize—I am all agitation. The enclosed* will abundantly plead my excuse. My fears are vanished; my past sorrows are forgotten. I will no more look back on the gloomy past; my eyes will presently behold a more delightful scene.—

* The foregoing Letter.

LETTER XVII.

ARTHUR COLLINS, ESQUIRE,

TO

SIR EDMUND CHETWYN.

PRAY congratulate me on my success. I have been very industrious.—Only three days ago I received your instructions, since which time, I have found out the right honorable rattling old maid; made love to her, like another Ovid, fought a duel with the poetical Colonel, her gallant; and finally extracted the precious secret of Miss Mortimer's residence.

“The

"The d—I you have," (methinks I hear you exclaim, starting from your seat in an ecstasy.)

It is very true though, Edmund; but that you may be perfectly satisfied, I will tell you the whole story, with the fidelity of an historian.

On the first night of my arrival here, I went to the rooms, partly through the influence of my lucky stars; but, in a great measure, owing to my own address and impudence, I was so fortunate as to procure Miss Percival for a partner. Flattery is the ladder of success,—(an odd sentiment, Edmund, but let it go,) so I immediately began to ascend. All the fine things I said,

said, through half the evening, were understood by the lady as mere efforts of compliment; at last, however, she began to apprehend me and grew sullen. I called upon her the following morning, she was *not at home*. I called again with no better success. On my third visit I received the same answer as before, but I was bent upon seeing her, and with the most graceful effrontery imaginable, I walked up into the dining-room. With that type of —, but a truce to scandal, for the present, — I determined to converse until Miss Percival's return. I had not fate long before I cast my eyes on a small cabinet, which stood on a harpsichord, in the corner of the room.

“Thou

“Thou art trusted with many secrets, my friend,” said I, (like another Shandy,) stroking my hand over the shining japan, — “Wilt thou admit me into thy confidence? Thou mayest be of infinite service to an unhappy friend of mine, and if thou art not uncharitable (I continued in the same modern stile of *fine sentiment*) thou canst not refuse thy assistance to the unfortunate.” — “Silence is the sign of consent, then” I exclaimed, taking the cabinet into my hand, which, I had before perceived was unlocked. — On opening the lid, I observed a bundle of letters tied together by a piece of red tape.

“They are written by a female,” (said I, hastily, applying the knot to

to my teeth) and will undoubtedly lead to some discovery."

It is something extraordinary, Edmund, that I could not open the first letter with a steady hand; it trembled like a withered leaf in a hurricane. I threw my eyes hastily over the manuscript, and, at the bottom, perceived the signature of "*Catharine*."—In the same instant, I adverted to the date, and found it recent enough to answer my purpose. I now felt an odd, qualmish sensation, which I cannot describe. "Miserable wretch, what art thou about to do?" cried my conscience.

"Traitor! return that letter to its sanctuary," said justice.

"Put

"Put it into thy pocket, Arthur," whispered my better genius, grinning most comically over my shoulder.

I obeyed the latter monitor.—

"Poll is no fool," exclaimed my quondam companion, as I took my hat from the harpsichord, in order to make my exit.

"Curse on your Shandeism, why do not you hasten to the sequel?" Why, so I will, Edmund, but our subject now begins to grow somewhat serious. I walked soberly home to my lodgings, but e're I had time to peruse the letter, I was disturbed by a loud rap at the door, and presently a smart, cockaded, livery

livery servant tripped across the room, put the following note into my hand, and then (after making a most graceful bow) vanished like a ghost.

SIR,

YOUR repeated insults towards a lady, whom I have the honour to call my friend, can no longer be suffered with impunity. I have heard you are a gentleman, you will not, therefore, refuse to meet me to-morrow morning at six o'clock, on Claverton-down; either to make a proper

Vol. I. H apology

apology for your extraordinary conduct, or to give satisfaction to,

Your's, &c.

White-Hart,
Wednesday Noon.

C. HARLEY.

What was to be done, Edmund? I confess I had not much inclination to engage this terrible man of war. However, I considered, that in affairs of this kind, a proper degree of confidence goes a great way. So, in order to shew my courage, I attempted to be whimsical.

"Mr.

“Mr. Collins, presents his compliments to Colonel Harley, and begs leave to assure him, that he has the happiness of such a universal acquaintance among the ladies, that he cannot possibly guess at the particular fair-one to whom the Colonel alludes in his letter. There is not, however, one of the whole sex for whom he would not spill his best blood. If, therefore, it will really give the Colonel the *satisfaction* he expresses, Mr. C—, has no objection to be run through the body, for the Colonel’s amusement: and will meet him, for that purpose, at the time and place appointed.”

York-House,
Wednesday Evening.

This note was written, and dispatched in a moment. Were I to tell thee, Edmund, that I passed the night, previous to this dreadful rencounter without tremors of heart, and twitchings of conscience, thou wouldst call me an hypocritical knave. So, I shall only inform thee, that the morning at length appearing, I repaired to the place of assignation. At a great distance I saw my antagonist and his second, walking backwards and forwards on the down. I put my best foot foremost in stepping towards them, by way of shewing that I was not averse to the meeting.

“Where is your friend, Sir,” said the Colonel, as I approached.

He

He seemed greatly surprised to see me alone.

"You are both my friends, without doubt, gentlemen, I replied, (assuming a contemptuous sort of grin) for I understand we came here to cut throats merely in an amicable way."

"We did not meet here for the purpose of jesting," answered my antagonist, "Do you prefer swords, or pistols?"

"Really I cannot say that I have any *particular attachment* to either. It shall be just as you please, Colonel."

"Do

"Do you mean to trifle, Sir;"

"By no means, Colonel, but as I am very civilly come here to be executed, I will thank you to tell me for what crime I am to suffer."

"Your pretensions to Miss Percival, Sir, — Your behaviour at the rooms, — Your insulting visits, — Your——"

"Hold, Colonel," I interrupted, "pray try me for one offence at a time."

"D—n, your prevarication, Sir, take your pistols, or by my maker."

"This is an excellent joke, said I," taking the pistols, and bursting into
into

into a loud laugh, in hopes of stopping the torrent of his rage.

“Downright mockery, you mean not deliberately to insult me?”

“Very far from it, Colonel,—but what of Miss Percival? She is a sensible, accomplished woman, and—”

“You are a *scoundrel*, Sir,” cried my adversary, in a voice of thunder!

Here then was the *ne plus ultra*. It was now too late to parley.—There was no time for discussion,—no possibility of a reconciliation, without digesting a few ounces of lead. So I coolly stepped backwards,

wards, and taking my ground, at a proper distance, desired my opponent to fire. He directly pulled the trigger. His shot whistled past my right ear. Finding myself unhurt, I turned round, and heroically discharged my pistol in the air.

Here my adversary's second advanced, and desired to know what I meant by this proceeding.

"I mean nothing, I answered, but to shew that I do not deserve the *honourable* title, which the Colonel has been kind enough to bestow upon me."

My antagonist now approached. He believed, he said, by my conduct, that I was a man of honour; and,

and, if I would give up my pretensions to Miss Percival, he should be happy to take me by the hand.

“It is impossible, Sir, that I can give up my pretensions to the lady in question, because I never had any. All I have said to her, has been meant as mere compliment. If I have, inadvertently, offended her, I am sorry for it. As to my repeated visits, they were occasioned by a desire to ask a few questions respecting a particular friend. I remember to have heard her say, that she has lately been in Wales; and it afterwards occurred to me, that she might probably have known a *Miss Mortimer*.—A young lady for whom I have the greatest regard, but who, I am sorry to hear——”

“ Say

“ Say no more,” cried the Colonel, flinging his pistols over his head, “ I know the whole story.— That lady and Miss Percival, are the most intimate friends in the universe; and, from this moment, I hope, you and I shall be the same.”

He then shook me by the hand very heartily, and a ludicrous period was put to our rencounter. You must acknowledge, however, that I conducted myself throughout this whole business, with admirable skill and address. The firing of my pistol in the air, after the first shot, was the only means by which I could avoid being shot at a *second time* — But I do not pretend to assert, that I am the first of the gallant corps of duelists who have practised this
heroic

heroic *manœuvre* from the *same* *motive*.

During our walk home, the Colonel was particularly lavish in his praises of Miss Mortimer; but he was exceedingly cautious and reserved on the subject of the elopement. Having gained sufficient intelligence on that head from the letter, which I then had in my pocket, I did not think it adviseable to put any questions to him, that might appear, in the least, singular or pointed. Indeed, I frequently said, that I was sorry so amiable a woman as Miss Mortimer, should ever have been disgraced by the addresses of such a character as Sir Edmund Chetwyn, a man of the most libertine principles. This, you

you know, Edmund, was the most elegant encomium I could possibly bestow upon you. At the same time it heightened my own character in the opinion of my stupid companion; and served to ingratiate me still more in his favor.

You are now impatient for the contents of the letter. Take them then, thou happy baronet, — thou illegitimate child of good fortune! and acknowledge, that, on this occasion, I have rendered thee an important service, which all the exertions of thy gratitude, all the endeavours of thy future life, can never sufficiently requite.

The lovely blue-eyed Catharine, at this very instant, is not five miles distant

distant from her father's house.— Stay, start not!—She is under the protection of an humble cottager, whose name is Llawenydd, a tenant of Mr. Mortimer's, who lives near the sea-shore. He has concealed her in a cottage, which is somewhere hidden in the woods near his dwelling. She is on the point of being married to a Lieutenant Ackland, of the Navy, whom you formerly mentioned, as your suspected rival. The letter seems to intimate that he is expected, every moment, on the coast, in order to convey her to Guernsey. There is nothing required, on your part, but diligence. It is not yet too late to recover this inestimable prize. Fly instantly to her retreat.—You will probably find her

VIO CATHARINE.

her gathering flowers among the
brakes and bushes.

LETTER XVIII.

CATHARINE,

TO THE

HONORABLE MISS PERCIVAL.

HE is not yet arrived,—In vain
have I expected him every
moment, since day break. I have
been looking on the water until my
eyes ache with watching. Vessel
after vessel passed by, but no red
flag has yet appeared. I am strange-
ly superstitious, my dear friend, and
begin to fear I shall never see him
more

more. I have lately been harraſed by the moſt terrible dreams. Laſt night, I thought I ſaw him arrive on the coaſt. He haſtened towards my dwelling, and entered the wood by the private path, which I have before deſcribed to you. He approached my hut, I was running to fling myſelf into his arms, when, juſt at that inſtant, a tyger ſprung from among the buſhes, attacked, and fled with him into the thickeſt part of the wood, and I ſaw him no more. I have not ſince dared to ſtir near the place. Every thing around me wears a gloomy aſpect. How do I wiſh myſelf out of this wood!

In Continuation.

There is a dawn of hope. A small skiff is just come in sight.— I think I can perceive something like a flag on the mast, but it is not possible yet to judge, with certainty, as the vessel is at a great distance, and almost lost in mist.

In Continuation.

I have ventured half way down the alley, that leads to the shore, in order to have a better view of the ocean. As I returned, I felt a strange horrible sensation, when I passed the place where I saw the tiger in my dream.

In

In Continuation.

The sail comes nearer. My hopes increase. — It is certainly a flag on the mast. I am preparing every thing for my departure.

In Continuation.

The vessel holds off the coast, it skims by! — It is gone! — I am exhausted with watching, and am going to retire to my hut. My mind is torn with the most dreadful presages. Alas! Charlotte, when will there be an end to my anxiety and my sorrows?

114 CATHARINE.

LETTER XIX.

THE HONOURABLE MISS PERCIVAL,

TO

CATHARINE.

I REJOICE at your good fortune. Your *letter has given me inexpressible pleasure. When I write again I shall address you at Guernsey. This I send, merely as a scrawl of adventures. Should you have left your retreat before it arrives, and it should fall into improper hands, the discovery will come too

* It seems that Miss Percival had not received Catharine's last letter, as she appears here to allude to letter XVII.

too late to be productive of much mischief. It will be in vain to spread the net after the bird has flown.— But, I suppose you have left proper instructions respecting your letters, with the cottager, to whom they are directed.

You know, I always told you, that I should one day make some noise in the world. For this week past, my name has been echoed through all the fashionable circles. Go where you will, “The honorable Miss Percival” is continually buzzed in your ears. But what wonderful atchievment have I performed? A most noble one, I assure you. I have occasioned a tournament (inadvertently I must confess) between two of the most he-

roic mortals that ever shone in the annals of chivalry. The story is this,—A very gay and gallant man of modern fashion, whose name is Collins, a few evenings ago, at the rooms, did me the honour of leading me down a country dance.—During the course of the evening, he was extremely civil, and said a number of smart things; but his civility was more pointed than I unluckily could have wished it. Of this, I informed Colonel Harley, whom I begged, in a jocular manner to return the obligation, in any way he thought the most proper, as I was desirous of shewing my gratitude. The Colonel instantly took fire. His face was like a figure in Geometry, full of lines, circles, rectangles, and triangles. After some hesitation,

hesitation, he told me, there were two ways in which he could resent the affront. He would either challenge the aggressor immediately, or, what he deemed a greater punishment, would instantly chastise him with some smart verses, which he would write, and post in every public place from the Crescent to the South Parade. I answered, that the sword and the pen were both dangerous instruments, and it was difficult to say which had the sharpest point, or which was most fatal. That I was not so sanguinary as to prefer such mortal weapons, and therefore begged that he would attempt to settle the matter without brandishing either.

On

On the following morning, the Colonel came to inform me, that a proper concession had been made, and that, after exchanging a single shot with his antagonist, they were now on the most friendly footing with each other. Not having the least idea that what I had said, in my usual unthinking manner, could possibly cause the affair to be carried to such a serious extremity, I was much surprised at this account. But how awkward were my feelings, when he added, that the gentleman whom he had challenged and fought, was a relation of your ladyship's, and moreover your intimate friend. At first, I was determined not to give credit to such an improbability, but the Colonel assured me, that Mr. Collins had himself told him

him this story, whose veracity he could not doubt, on account of several circumstances he had mentioned, which he could not possibly have been acquainted with, had you not treated him as your friend and counsellor. Your elopement was well known to him, and he had even hinted at the place of your concealment.

In short, Mr. Collins has been formally introduced to me by Colonel Harley. He is a professed wit, and a smart, fashionable, pretty fellow. I love him, because he speaks of you in terms of respect and admiration, but more on account of his dislike to Sir Edmund Chetwyn, your persecutor, whom, without mincing the matter, he
calls


calls a disolute abandoned villain. If he goes on thus, I shall assuredly elect him my Cecisbo, while the Colonel, who was silly enough to throw him in my way a second time, may think himself well off, if he succeeds only to the title of husband.

LETTER XX.

SIR EDMUND CHETWYN,

TO

ARTHUR COLLINS, ESQUIRE.



I GIVE you ten thousand thanks, Arthur. — Your letter came most critically to my relief. Before

fore I received it, I was driving with the fury of a Mail-coachman, on the very last stage of despair. I have just read your excellent billet to Mr. Mortimer. Its contents have absolutely run away with his gout and his senses. He has hung his crutches over the chimney-piece, and is now dancing, jumping, and whirling round the room, performing his evolutions with the swiftness of a marble over an EO table.

It is decreed then, Arthur, that I am to see this divine creature again; Precious jade! thy sparkling eye, thy rosy lips, and soft white hand, will plead for forgiveness. Yes, I *will* forgive thee all that is past, catch thee up in my arms and wipe away thy swelling tears. But if ever thou
escapest

escapest me again; if ever I become thy dupe a second time, may I be suspended in effigy, from the ceiling of the drawing-room, adorned with a large flowing wig, and the broad laced waistcoat of an Alderman,—an object of scorn, to be pointed at by “the slow and moving finger of scorn.” Or if an assembly of rakes, wits, and coxcombs, can invent a still greater punishment, may it be inflicted upon me without mercy.

We are now going to the chace. Thou hast put us upon an excellent scent, and, without doubt, we shall have fine sport. Our horses are saddled, and our noble pack, consisting of woodcutters, peasants, jockeys,

jockeys, and livery-boys, will be turned off.

I have promised a large reward to the first who shall *give tongue*. It is a large wood, I am informed, that we are to beat over, but should we once start our beautiful game, the boughs are so thick, that she can never break cover.

So, here we go, hark forward!—
Tally-ho!

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

CATHARINE,

T O

THE HONOURABLE MISS PERCIVAL.

HOW have you been deceived my dearest friend! — The man whom you describe is perfectly unknown to me. He is, without doubt, some confederate of Sir Edmund Chetwyn's, who, with no good design, has imposed upon your credulity. Be upon your guard, my dear Charlotte, against this specious parasite. It is not improbable, that he is spreading a snare, in which,

which, perhaps, all your precautions cannot prevent you from being entangled. To draw you into a breach of confidence, and by this means to come at the secret of my residence, is undoubtedly his object. How many are there plotting against my happiness and peace of mind! Why am I thus singled out as a prey to unfeeling persecution?—Why am I made an alien to the sweet joys of society?—Does not every creature under heaven delight to herd with its own species? And were we not all framed by nature with a disposition to administer kindness and compassion to each other? Alas! the very insects around me, the bees that skim from flower to flower, the blue flies that spread their silken wings, and glitter in the

the

the sun-shine, — the gilded moths that feed on the green leaves, the grasshopper skipping over the herbs, and the ants creeping among the moss beneath my feet,—all swarm together in common with their kind, and each seems to be social with its fellow. Every thing that I see is happy, while I alone am deprived of the joys of sweet converse with those I love. I am left alone to prey on my own horrid thoughts, or am visited only by the ghastly and hedious phantoms of terror and superstition. I once thought I could be happy in my solitude, but alas—

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

Oh!

Oh! heavens, Charlotte, — He comes! Mr. Ackland's vessel appears. It is impossible that I can now be mistaken.

In Continuation.

Yes! — It is beyond all doubt the long-expected vessel. She has but one sail. Above it I can plainly perceive the red flag fluttering in the wind. She comes in triumph. A gentle breeze springs up, swelling her snow-white canvas. How swiftly she cuts through the furrowed ocean, bounding and dancing over the billows, while the sun gilds her streaming flag, and brightens her expanded sail.

In

In Continuation.

He is now within two miles of the shore. A few minutes more, and I shall rush into his arms, and there take shelter from all my sorrows.

In Continuation.

The gale encreases. The vessel tosses violently upon the ocean. She will presently come to an anchor.

In Continuation.

A heavy shower of rain has driven me back to my hut. A large black cloud

cloud is passing over me, which covers this vast wood with thick darkness. The gale is risen to a hurricane; the rain pours in torrents. I have lost sight of the vessel, and of the ocean. A deep mist closes around me, nor can I see even to the extremity of the wood.

In Continuation.

Whither shall I fly?—Never before was I witness to so tremendous a scene. The rain smoaks along the rocks. The rolling thunder roars through the wood. The lightning descends in sheets, rending in pieces the broad limbs of the stately oaks, that are crashing over my head.—

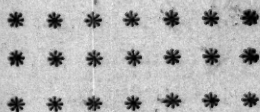
In Continuation.

He must inevitably perish, my Charlotte. He will be dashed to
Vol. I. K atoms.

atoms. Even at this distance, methinks I hear his horrid shrieks, that are echoed back by the deep caverns of the wood. I cannot stir to his relief. I am enveloped in darkness, except when a burst of lightning affords me a transient view of the surrounding objects.—Again I hear the dreadful cries of the mariners.—

Ah! my dear love, a timorous, weak and helpless woman, what assistance can I afford you, in this perilous moment?—But why do I stay here in safety? If I cannot assist, I can *die* with you.—

I come, my dearest lord, in spite of lightnings, storms and whirlwinds, I come.—



Miserable wretch! to what a scene of horror have thy streaming eyes been witness. The last sight of thy wretched husband has chilled thy heart everlastingly.

Oh, Charlotte, he is gone! — I reached the sea-side at the very moment in which he perished. The vessel had sunk, and he was cleaving to a rock, within a small space of the shore. The sight of me seemed, for a moment, to recruit his exhausted strength, and inspire him with fresh courage. He was then half buried in the waves. I shrieked!

ed! — He stretched out his feeble arms to me, as if for assistance. — At that very instant a tremendous wave washed him from his hold, and overwhelmed him for ever! — Had not my cruel heart been harder than the rock on which he perished, I should have plunged after him into the ocean. But, Oh! miserable cowardice, I have returned to my hut, there to lay me down and submit to the more dreadful pangs of a lingering death.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.